

Harry potter and the sorcerer's stone: film review

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Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone

While each movie introduced into society brings a new sense of reality, Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone written by J. K. Rowling and directed by Chris Columbus brought a whole new world into the lives of millions. Not only did the book seem to take the world by storm, the movies seemed to do an even better job at capturing the hearts of both old and young. Harry Potter and friends showed the world a new side of magic that exposed witches and wizards alike. Although this was only the first movie, reviewers raved over the advanced special effects used to entrance the audience. Each country that I researched had almost the same take on Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone as the next one. From the United States to Japan, the young wizard took flight and soared to new heights.

Along with the actors in Harry Potter that are from Great Britain, the setting of this movie was filmed all around England. The citizens of the United States welcomed the movie with open minds and open hearts. According to Roger Ebert, an acclaimed movie reviewer, the biggest challenge Chris Columbus faced was keeping the movie as close to the book as possible. The reviewer states that " A lot of things could have gone wrong, and none of them have: Chris Columbus' movie is an enchanting classic that does full justice to a story that was a daunting challenge. The novel by J. K. Rowling was muscular and vivid, and the danger was that the movie would make things too cute and cuddly" (Ebert). The worries that the audience faced were put to ease when they saw the director's take on the novel they all so dearly loved.

The nervousness that most people felt while anticipating this first Harry Potter movie was felt through almost all the reviews that I read through. The reviewers from the United States figured that the only reason to omit anything from the book was to keep the story in sync. If the director was to digress into something other than what was going on in that moment, the audience would be lost to the main points presented in the movie. The reason that many movies do not resemble their novels is because the producer does not take the time to read the book. I realized that everyone who read the book just anticipated the release of a new type of culture. Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone was the launching pad of an empire. Getting the first movie to correctly match the first book was crucial. This seemed to be the most important aspect that many of the American reviewers focused on. Having the ability to compare and contrast specific details of the book and the movie made reviewing the movie a bit more difficult. I believe that Columbus and Rowling faced many challenges when it came to pleasing the fans and the critics. I can only imagine the pressure they felt to have a performance that was spot on. Like many other reviews written by the United States authors, authenticity was viewed as vital to the movies success. Likewise, British movie reviewers focused on similar characteristics implanted in the movie.

The setting of the movie is just as important to the movie as a whole as it is in the book. The movie, filmed in England, took special effects to a new level. The British reviewers collectively agreed that the special effects did more for the movie than they ever could've imagined. I read a review that stated " A very pointy hat's off to the special effects crew on this film — every detail

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was executed with care — the haunted oil portraits, the moving staircases, the floating candles, the resident ghosts — especially John Cleese as Nearly Headless Nick — were spot on” (Clisby). The landscape was transformed when the magical world of Hogwarts was brought to life. The castle, that everyone secretly wished was their school, was a visionary miracle that stunned everyone. I recently watched this movie over and paid special attention to the magical aspect of the wizard world. Although everyone knows that it is not reality we are looking at, the floating candles and quidditch matches seemed unbelievably believable.

The culture that reflects the Harry Potter series first formed when J. K. Rowling brought the characters to life in her books. However, people like myself who have never read the book took on this culture through the movies. I’m always told that I am not a true Harry Potter fan because I have never read the nine books. In Japan, there are many subcultures that have taken over the youth. The Harry Potter fan club in Japan embraced the movies wildly with wizard costumes and magic wands. The cosplay that reviewers noticed while attending the openings to the movie gave them a new appreciation of the audience. Daniel Radcliffe even stated that “Japanese fans are the best” (Kambayashi). As the magical world of wizards and witches took hold of the lives of Japanese youth, many reviewers worried about whether or not the movie will live up to the hype in other countries such as the United States.

In the article written in the Japan Times, the author compares the box-office records of Japan’s most popular movie “Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi” to

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the success of “ Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone” in America. By comparing the box-office records of the most successful movies in Japan and America, the reviewer gains insight into what people are looking for in theaters. Movies cost a lot of money to make, like all products, they must make money in return to keep fueling the industry. “ Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone” was a perfect film to prove this point. The immense popularity that this movie acquired showed that money does matter. Ireland and Great Britain happened to be just two more countries that “ Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone” broke box office records. The Irish movie reviewer mentioned that The movie also broke records in Britain where it is known as Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, taking in £16 million sterling (€25.7 million) over the opening weekend” (O’Clery). People watching the first installment of a long popular series participated in the making of film history. For many years to come, this first movie would be known as the original Harry Potter. The record breaking movie gained the attention of reviewers everywhere.

The movie reviewers each shared a common point. Although from different countries, all the reviews I read the, main goal was to reconstruct the movie in a way for everyone to understand. It’s a lot easier for me to make a smart decision on whether or not to spend the money on seeing the new movie out. The movie reviewers from around the world recognize that the Harry Potters series impacted the film industry. The first of the series set the tone for the next seven to come; each one doing better than the last. The film industry is such a large business that by extending the audience to different countries, we become a more globalized society. The way Harry Potter was

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viewed in our own backyard contrary to the citizens of Japan. There seem to be more ways that we are alike in the way we accept a movie. Throughout my research each country touched on a different aspect of the movie.

Japan, London, Ireland, and the United States all revealed a new way to interpret the success of “ Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone.” I learned that transforming a book into a Blockbuster movie is filled with pressure. The pressure to please audience does not only come from the United States, but from fans all around the world. To truly become involved in a money I must feel that I can truly believe the story being told. The special effects team of this movie was praised by all of the critics I read from. They know that seeing is believing for many. By recognizing that the team created an alternate reality for many, they made the movie that much better. In result, “ Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone” was established differently according to society. Movie reviews from around the world show a new form of globalization. We all see the same movie.